



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

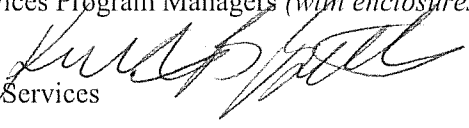
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MEMORANDUM

TO: CSB Executive Directors (*without enclosures*)
CSB Substance Abuse Services Program Managers (*with enclosures*)

FROM: Kenneth Batten, Director 
Office of Substance Abuse Services

RE: NATIONAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTION RECOVERY MONTH 2005

DATE: July 7, 2005

It is time again to support **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month**, now in its 16th year of celebration. *Recovery Month* demonstrates the societal benefits of substance abuse treatment and promotes the message that recovery from substance use in all its forms is possible. This year's theme, "***Join the Voices for Recovery: Healing Lives, Families and Communities,***" is intended to highlight the following areas in which communities can continue to improve:

- Assessing addictions problems and referring people to the treatment and support services that they need, and providing their families with support programs that can help them;
- Helping people access those treatment and support services; and
- Promoting measures that can make treatment more affordable, equitable and available.

Virginia has been selected as one of ten states that will receive assistance in planning *Recovery Month 2005* activities. Virginia's forty community services boards (CSBs) have a strong history of meaningful participation in *Recovery Month*. Enclosed is a matrix of *Recovery Month* activities that CSBs implemented last year. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has contracted with Synergy Enterprises, Inc. to assist us in planning, coordinating and publicizing a large event in September that will take place in Richmond but will include a number of statewide organizations and interests.

We need to provide SAMHSA with a summary of the state's plans for Recovery Month 2005. Our goal is to document at least one Recovery Month 2005 event for each of the forty CSBs (100% participation). We are requesting that you submit a brief description of the activities that you plan to implement on the attached Recovery Month Planning Form and submit it to our office by July 29, 2005. A copy of the form and this letter can be found on our office website (<http://www.dmhmrzas.virginia.gov/OSAS-default.htm>). You may download the form

in Word, and email it to Katherine Fornili @ kathy.fornili@co.dmhmrsas.virginia.gov or fax it to (804) 786-4320.

To help you make a difference, SAMHSA has prepared the enclosed *Recovery Month* kit of media outreach and targeted outreach materials. We encourage you to use these tools and messages to educate others in your communities about the success of substance abuse treatment and the role that treatment plays in reclaiming lives ravaged by alcoholism and drug addiction.

Recovery Month kits are also being sent to **Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA)** affiliates. If you are not already doing so, we would encourage you to work with your nearest affiliate, or work with **SAARA of Virginia, Inc.** to help establish an additional SAARA affiliate in your area. SAARA's mission is to maximize the power of people to advocate for treatment and recovery in order to prevent the harmful effects of substance use disorders (SUDs) upon families, businesses, and the community. By putting a face on recovery and educating people about the nature of addiction and effectiveness of treatment, SAARA members provide evidence that there are many roads to recovery, and there are many solutions to the problems associated with SUDs.

SAMHSA promotes efforts to educate health professionals (physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, pharmacists, etc.) to identify SUDs and intervene early, especially in the early stages when the potential for success is high and medical and social costs are relatively low. Health professionals encounter people with SUDs in their clinical settings every day, but they may feel unprepared to address SUDs in their patient populations, or may lack confidence in the effectiveness of treatment. Screening, brief intervention and referral activities are important strategies to reach individuals who need treatment but have not yet received it, and are consistent with Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) 2005 goals for demand reduction. These include preventing the initiation of substance use, intervening early with those who have initiated use, and improving treatment for those who are dependent upon substances.

To help you reach out to health professionals and educate them about the risks of undetected and untreated SUDs, the enclosed *Recovery Month* kit contains a targeted outreach pamphlet called **"Screening, Referrals, and Affordable Addiction Treatment Options: A Guide for Health Care Providers."** Also enclosed is an updated (2004) version of Virginia's **"Substance Abuse Tool Box: Information for Primary Care Providers."** Please review these materials, discuss them with health professionals that serve your patient population, and contact our office if you wish to set up training events for health professionals in your area.

We encourage you to participate fully in *Recovery Month* 2005 activities. Very shortly you will receive information about activities being planned throughout the state. **If you have any questions about Recovery Month 2005, please contact Katherine Fornili at (804) 786-4301 or 786-3906.** Once again, thank you for your ongoing efforts to help people with SUDs heal themselves and the communities in which they live.

cc: James S. Reinhard, MD
Frank Tetrick
Mark Blackwell